

# Times Fight Against Gas Monopoly Ejects Aid From All Classes

## PRICE OF GAS IS DISCUSSED IN DAISH BRIEF

### CHEAP GAS FIGHT A SUCCESS IN OHIO TOWN AND 60 CENTS IS ALL PATRONS ARE CHARGED

#### People Heart and Soul In Cheaper Gas Fight; Furnish Valuable Data

#### Attorney Describes Relation of Capital to the Amount Charged for Product.

Bearing on the refusal of Auditor Payne to permit the question of the rates for gas to be considered at the hearing of the petition of the Georgetown Gas Light Company, John B. Daish, appearing as a friend of the court, yesterday filed a brief in the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia. Corporation Counsel Thomas argued at length, before the court auditor in support of his contention that this suit had a direct bearing upon the rates for gas.

Auditor Payne, however, following out his theory that the act was passed for the protection of the stockholders of the gas company and failing to find that the gas consumer was considered at all, held that there was no relation between the capitalization of the company and the cost of gas to the consumer.

#### Value of Good Will.

Of the value of good will Attorney Daish says: "The company began with a comparatively small capital and gas at a rate much higher than now. By successive litigation, the former has doubtless been increased, and the latter, by successive litigation, has been decreased. Both changes have been brought about by the increase in population, with a subsequent increase in demand for gas and improvements in the methods of manufacturing gas, so that it could be made and marketed cheaper than in years gone by. The causes of this increased value and the decreased price of gas lie not within either the control or direction of the petitioner. The fact that the company now manufactures and sells a greater quantity of gas is not due to its efforts; other influences have created the demand. The present price of gas is by virtue of legislative enactment, after hearings before appropriate committees of Congress, in which efforts were made by the company to prevent the reduction.

#### Prevents Rate Reduction.

"This is the greatest of all objections to watered stocks and bonds. They are issued to represent the future increase in the earning power of a public franchise. A public franchise owned by a corporation increases its profit earning capacity with the increase of population. This increased value is due to the franchises which the people have given away to the corporation. The people are entitled to the benefits of that increase, and it could be readily secured to the people by a resolution of charges. But by stock dividends, based on this increased value of the franchises, the property of the public is divided and yet declared not more than 6 or 3 per cent dividends. The smallness of the dividend prevents a legislative reduction in rates. If, however, no stock dividend were allowed, and the large profits were employed in improving the property or in making extravagant dividends, a reduction of rates would be inevitable."

#### FORTISSIMO.

The family were gathered in the library admiring a splendid thunder storm when the mother betthought herself of Dorothy, alone in the nursery, says Brooklyn Life. Fearing lest her little daughter should be awakened and feel afraid, she slipped away to reassure her. Pausing at the door, however, in a vivid flash of lightning, which illumined the whole room, she saw her youngest olive branch sitting straight up in bed. Her big brown eyes were glowing with excitement, and she clapped her chubby hands, while she shouted encouragingly, "Bang it again, Lord! Bang it again!"

#### Systematic Warfare of Municipality Crowned With Success.

#### Hamilton, Ohio, Stands As Example for Others to Follow.

HAMILTON, Ohio, Dec. 7.—Artificial gas can be manufactured and sold to the public at 60 cents a thousand cubic feet, and the company that sells it at that price can make money. There is no longer any question about this statement, for gas is being manufactured and sold in this city at 60 cents. It has even been sold as low as 33 cents, but not to the consumer. The gas company sold gas to the city of Hamilton at 33 cents and the city, which had several hundred customers for its municipal gas plant, sold it to these customers at 60 cents. The city of Hamilton would still be buying gas for 33 cents a thousand were it not for a bitter political fight that has raged here for several years, and which has split things so wide open that no one can tell who is his political friend and who is his enemy. It is not necessary to go into the details of this fight here, further than to say that friction developed between the city administration and the gas company, which boosted the price of its gas from 33 cents to 60 cents, and this is what the city is paying now.

#### Hamilton's Fight for Cheap Gas.

The Hamilton Otto Coke Company makes all the gas that is produced or sold in Hamilton. Years ago there was a gas company that had a plant here and it made water gas which it sold to the consumers at \$1.75 a thousand. The city finally concluded that this price was too high and there was a popular demand for cheaper gas, just as there is a demand for cheaper gas in Indianapolis. Efforts were made to bring about a reduction in the price. The people wanted it brought down to a respectable figure, but the gas company was obdurate and maintained its price. The indignation of the people was aroused, as it has been in Washington, and nothing would quench the fire of that indignation but gas at a lower price.

But the city and the gas company were not able to get together, and then the demand arose for a municipal gas plant which would make and sell gas cheaper than the company was furnishing it. The plan took with a hurrah and the city of Hamilton erected its municipal gas plant. It made water gas and supplied it to the people at \$1.25. Of course, the city got most of the customers. Then the gas company reduced the price below the city's price. The city made another reduction and so did the company, and thus it went until Hamilton was getting water gas at 33 cents a thousand.

#### Gratifiers Ruined Municipal Business.

Political gratifiers got their fingers into the municipal gas business and ruined it. Nearly two years ago the gratifying had become so strong and notorious that the people of Hamilton decided to make a change, so they elected a new set of city officers, and one of the first things that the new officials did was to start an investigation of the municipal gas business. They discovered that the water and electric plants were making money for the city, but that the gas plant was losing from \$60 to \$65 a day, and that it was due to the gratifiers. Immediately the municipal gas plant was closed down and no more gas was made by the city. This left the field open to the Hamilton Otto Coke Company, which had organized the Hamilton Gas and Electric Com-

pany as its selling and distributing company.

The city had to have gas for the customers that were on its municipal mains, and the board of public service made a contract with the Hamilton company to supply the city with gas at 33 cents a thousand, delivered at the city's gas holder. The city then sold this gas to its customers at the same price charged by the Hamilton company, 80 cents, and made money out of it.

#### Still Lower Price Demanded.

Another city campaign was coming on, and political complications arose which involved the gas question. The city demanded a still lower price, and the Hamilton company refused to give it. The city talked of granting a franchise for bringing in natural gas from the West Virginia field, and it was then that the Hamilton Gas and Electric Company took a fall out of the city administration without affecting the general public. Last June the Hamilton Gas and Electric Company served notice on the city that, beginning on July 1, the price of gas to the city and everybody else would be 60 cents a thousand cubic feet, delivered at the city's holder, instead of 33 cents. The city could not prevent the increase in the price, because it buys its gas only from day to day, and not under a long-time contract.

Although it raised the price on the city, the Hamilton Gas and Electric Company reduced the price to its own consumers to 60 cents. Of course, the city could not charge more, so now it pays 60 cents for its gas and sells it at 60 cents. The people are not complaining, but the politicians are howling loud and long.

#### Not Only Cheap, But of Best Quality.

But the fact remains that Hamilton is getting cheap gas, and the low price has come to stay. Not only is it getting gas at a low figure, but it is getting the best gas that can be made anywhere by any process. The people are delighted with it. They say it is the best gas that Hamilton ever had. It is high in candlepower and high in heat units, and these are the qualities that make good gas.

The products of the Hamilton Otto Coke Company are coke, gas, tar and ammonia. Each of these is taken care of separately, though all are produced in the process of burning the coke.

Coke produced by the United Otto by-product coke oven process is of the very highest quality. It replaces anthracite coal as a domestic fuel because of its cleanliness and lasting qualities as well as being cheaper. One ton of Otto coke lasts as long as one ton of anthracite. It is superior to gashouse coke because the latter makes a quick, flashy fire, but is not lasting. Otto coke is denser, has more substance and resembles hard coal in its heat-producing qualities. It is better than beehive coke, because, owing to the length of time required in the Otto coke manufacture, a very hard, dense coke is produced, which makes it hard to ignite.

When it comes to domestic use the Hamilton Otto Coke Company advertises these points in its favor: Lasts as long as hard coal, ton for ton. Heats the house much quicker.

You can carry a low fire with it.

Keeps over night.

You get no clinkers; it burns to ash.

No poisonous gas.

Smokeless, no dirt.

#### Process of Manufacture.

The coal which is made into coke comes from West Virginia. The coal from that field is low in sulphur, a necessary quality in coking. It is the absence of sulphur that determines the quality of coke for the most important uses. Coal is dumped from cars into a pit, where it is crushed into small particles, perhaps the size of a pea or smaller. From the pit it is elevated into a coal bin above one end of the battery of ovens. A "larry" takes this crushed coal out over the ovens and drops it into the openings at the top. When an oven is filled, lids are placed over these openings. The "larry" is operated by electricity, as is all the other mechanism about the ovens. While the coal is being baked into

coke, gas is generated in the ovens. This is taken off through large mains that extend along the edge at the top of the ovens. The gas produced during the first ten to fourteen hours of the coking process is of high quality, while that produced later is not so rich in illuminants. The low quality gas has the same heat units and the same heat-producing qualities as the high-grade gas, but it is not as high in candlepower, and therefore would not be as salable as the higher quality gas. Dampers in the flues of the big ovens which lead to the big mains control the separation of the two gases. One damper sends the high quality gas into one main, and when the quality of gas is lessened, after about ten to fourteen hours of the coking process, this damper is closed and another opened, which sends the gas into the low quality main. Extreme care is taken in the separation of these two gases, because it is the high quality gas that is sold to the consumer in Hamilton.

#### Collecting Tar and Purifying Gas.

When the gas leaves the ovens it is, of course, of the same temperature as the ovens, but it cools rapidly as it passes through the big main, which is exposed to the atmosphere. As the gas cools the tar which it contains settles, because it is heavier than the gas. At various points along the line of the big main the tar drops from the main into huge pits or pans containing water, which prevents the gas from escaping with the tar. The gas is almost entirely relieved of tar before it reaches the cooling, washing and scrubbing tanks, but it is in these tanks that the last of the tar and all traces of ammonia are removed from the gas. When the gas gets into the coolers, it passes through pipes that are surrounded by water. This process condenses the gas and removes all impurities. From the coolers it enters the washers and scrubbers, where it passes through water which takes out the ammonia. Then it goes through a purifying process and into a pipeline ready for distribution.

#### Use of the Low Quality Gas.

The low quality gas that comes from the ovens during the last hours of the coking process is used for fuel for the coke ovens. It goes through the same process from the removal of tar and ammonia as does the high-grade gas, and the amount of tar and ammonia obtained from it is just the same as from the high-grade gas. But the low-grade gas is not purified. It is pumped into a gas holder and from there into mains that take it to the ovens, where, when combined with air that is forced in by a huge fan, it forms a combustion and heats the ovens.

All the gas that is piped off and sold is known as surplus gas, because the primary use of all the gas produced is for fuel for the ovens, but a plant does not require all the gas that is generated, so the high-grade gas is purified and sold. This is why it is generally remarked here in Hamilton that the coke company could make money even if it did not sell a foot of gas. There is no way to prevent the generation of gas in the manufacture of coke; therefore, it is simply a question of whether the gas shall be sold at some price or allowed to shoot into the air and be wasted. That is the whole secret of the cheap proposition. If the plant were operated for the sole purpose of making gas and nothing else it could not be sold at that price, but when gas is a by-product along with tar and ammonia, it is easy to see how it can be sold at 60 cents at a profit.

The Hamilton Otto coke plant is very economically managed. There is not a bit of anything wasted. Everything about the plant must be put to some use. As an instance of this, take the coke "breeze." In the handling of coke there is always produced a lot of coke dust, which is not salable. This is called "breeze." It will burn, however, and the coke plant uses it under the ovens in its powerhouse. Thus the waste from the plant supplies the fuel at practically no cost.

And this power plant which is a necessary part of the institution, is also made to pay for itself. The company has put in two generators and is now selling its surplus electric current in a commercial way at a handsome profit.

#### Best Quality of Light and Fuel Furnished at Low Figure.

#### Company Could Cut Price in Half and Still Make Money.

because the same boilers that are required to supply power for the plant operate the electric generators at practically no expense.

#### No Trouble to Dispose of Products.

The Hamilton Otto Coke Company has never had any trouble in finding a market for its products. As stated, a large part of its coke was disposed of in Hamilton, but much of it was shipped to other cities.

On the ground adjoining that of the Hamilton Otto Coke Company a big hot furnace is being built by the Hamilton House and Iron Company, a new concern. This new plant will employ from 600 to 1,000 men and will have a capacity of 250 tons of pig iron daily, with 250 tons more of daily capacity to be added within a year. This plant is now under construction and will be in operation by May 1, 1908. It is this company that has agreed to buy all the coke manufactured by the Hamilton company for ten years.

The United Coke and Gas Company, which builds the Otto by-product coke oven plants, guarantees to produce 4,000 cubic feet of surplus gas from each ton of coal that is coked. In many cases the surplus gas production runs higher than this, but this is what the company guarantees to do. The Hamilton plant has shown as high as 5,000 feet of surplus gas a ton of coal, but the average has been below that figure. Not long ago the company discovered that it was not obtaining the usual results from the plant, as far as the production of gas was concerned, and the officers were at a loss to understand the trouble. But when the shut-down came, following the July storm, they found the reason for the shortage. The larger main damper that regulates the escape of heat into the main stack had rotted to such an extent that it was practically of no use, and the heat that should have passed through the tall stack was escaping through the main damper. A new damper is being put in and auxiliary drafters added, so as to provide against any such waste in the future.

#### All Charged Against Coke.

But inasmuch as coke is the principal product of the plant, and gas, tar and ammonia are merely the by-products, the entire cost of operation is charged against the coke account, none of it being charged up to the by-products. The coke manufactured more than pays the total cost of operation, thus actually placing the gas in the mains at absolutely no cost.

The following table gives the actual cost of operation of the Hamilton plant at 25 cents. It also shows the amount of receipts from the sale of coke, tar, and ammonia, leaving out entirely the gas and the electricity which it sells:

AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSE.	
Coal carbonized, per month, 6,800 tons	at \$12.50.....\$85,000
Labor, supplies, repairs, including salaries of managers, superintendents, as well as labor and supplies to keep the plant in good condition.....	6,440
(Average 90 per ton carbonized.)	
(Average will be reduced when output is increased.)	
AVERAGE MONTHLY RECEIPTS.	
Salable coke, 4,700 tons (70 per cent of coal), at average price of \$3.85 at coal, at \$4.50.....	\$17,375
Ammonia, 60,000 lbs. (10 per cent of coal), at \$4.50.....	\$2,700
Less 10 per cent commission.....	270
Tar, 40,000 gallons (12 gallons per ton), at \$4.50.....	\$1,800
Less 10 per cent commission.....	180
Total.....	22,905

#### Gas Does Not Cost a Cent.

These figures show an excess of receipts over expenditures for coke, tar, and ammonia alone of \$2,845 a month. This does not include the receipts from the sale of electrical current, which

Daily communications received by The Times show that the people of the District of Columbia are heart and soul in the fight for better and cheaper gas.

The letters contain suggestions, criticisms, complaints, and advice, all of which are of importance in formulating a plan of campaign whereby the efforts of the companies to increase their capital stock may be defeated and the consumer assured of the quantity and quality paid for.

That the amount of gas consumed is in many instances by no means commensurate with the size of the monthly bill is the statement contained in many of the letters.

In others are recited numerous instances in the history of the corporation, which tend to show that its officials do not at all times receive with graciousness the complaints of citizens from whom the company has derived millions.

#### Turning Gas Half Off

#### Made Bill Leap Up

To the Editor of The Washington Times: I see, through your paper, that the general public is allowed to cite its grievances on the gas question. I can say we have never had good gas; one night it may be comparatively good and the next that of the poorest. Complaints amount to nothing—you are referred to the Government Inspector.

I have a little gas plate in my kitchen on which we get breakfast; the laundry is done on the range. I have been told by people who do all their cooking and washing with gas that their bills do not exceed \$2 or \$3 a month, and in the summer often does not reach \$1. I rent three rooms in my house to gentlemen. One is a traveling man, who is often

amount to \$34.10 a year. And this also leaves out the surplus gas. The company gets about \$30,000.00 feet a year, and these figures show that this gas does not cost the company a cent. Why shouldn't it sell the gas for 60 cents under these circumstances?

And this output of gas will be increased by about 50 per cent by the improvements that are now being made at the plant. As Mr. Howell said, this solves the problem of cheap gas.

#### No Chance to Fail.

When this entire situation is looked over carefully there appears to be no possible chance for the Citizens' Gas Company of Indianapolis to fail of success. The movement for cheaper gas was fought all along, at every turn, with the argument that it was impossible to make gas and sell it at 60 cents at a profit to the manufacturer. This was drilled into the people with the greatest persistence, but this position has been proved false, for here is a company in Hamilton that actually makes the best quality of gas and sells it to the people at 60 cents a 1,000 feet, the identical rate for which the people of Indianapolis have been crying.

And this Hamilton company is tickled to death to get customers to take its gas at 60 cents. If there are any who will think that 60-cent gas is a failure let him come over here and have a look at the plant by this company and see the business that the company does.

The Hamilton Otto Coke Company is not secretive. The news representative was given access to all the figures relating to the business of the company and Mr. Howell explained in detail everything connected with the plant. The company is making money and is proud of it. The people of Hamilton are buying their gas for 60 cents, and they are proud of the institution that is furnishing it to them at that price.

#### Stir in Gas Circles.

But there is a stir in the gas world since this company put the price down to 60 cents. The move caused no end of comment in gas circles and it has been discussed in the gas publications. It is recognized that it has created a new situation in the gas business that must be met in some manner by competitors. Just how they are to do this is still the problem that they will have to work out for themselves.

away for a week or more at a time; one works until 12 o'clock at night, and one retires about 3 o'clock. No gas is wasted.

Upon making complaint I was referred, once, to the chief clerk, who told me to turn my gas off one-half. I did, and the bill was larger the next month than before. Another told me if I lived in a large house I must expect large bills.

The following is a partial list of the charges of the Washington Gas Company for the last year:

January, 1907.....	\$3.00 (no cooking)
May.....	5.00 (no cooking)
June.....	5.00
August, 1907.....	5.40
October, 1907.....	5.50
September, 1907.....	5.80
November, 1907.....	5.00 (breakfast)
December, 1907.....	5.50 (breakfast)

#### Quality of Gas Grows

#### Steadily Worse, He Says

To the Editor of The Washington Times: I truly concur with you in your noble fight against the Washington Gas Company.

Like Colonel Sellers' eye water, "the more you use the more you will have to use." "Millions in it." More gas as per meter, but less satisfaction as per consumer. More gas, less heat and light. To use appropriate slang, "hot air," high bills.

I have been a constant consumer of the so-called gas from the Washington Gas Company for thirty years, and I will say that in those years I have had a steady increase of gas and necessarily higher bills. The quality of the gas furnished, and also the inconvenience of having the ceilings above lit blackened by the smoke which the burning gas emits. Think of it—smoke from what the gas company says most "impossibly" is gas of the best quality.

We get very poor yellow gas, which proves it is saturated with oil, for good coal gas gives a white flame which brightens the room and makes reading a pleasure—not a sickly yellow light which ruins the eyes.

Keep the good work going, for you have started in the right way. L. WINTERS, 3337 Seventeenth St., N. W.

#### Given 80 Cents Rebate

#### On His Heavy Bills

To the Editor of The Washington Times: Let me extend my thanks for the position The Times has taken on the gas question. My experience with the gas company has only been the duplicate of that of hundreds of others who have had dealings with the company. During the winter of 1906-07 my bill averaged something over \$3 per month. Last summer, when business was dull and I was using but little gas, my bills continued over \$3. I complained to the District Inspector. On his inspection he notified me that the meter had been running at a too rapid rate. Some time afterward I was called to the gas office and received a rebate of 80 cents for four months. At the pressing of business this fall I installed electric lights, and since then have used gas only for four months. At the pressing of my bill for November I was \$8.50 in arrears. My bill for November was \$8.50 for an illuminated sign. Thus it will be seen that the more I try to do without gas the bigger my bill grows.

M. LOWENSTEIN.

#### Consumer Left to Pay

#### For Gas That Escaped

To the Editor of The Washington Times: Am consumer of gas and detected smell of gas in basement near meter. Notified gas company. They sent a man out. He pried and scraped around the meter and said there is a leak there all right, but I can't find it. He went away and the company left me either to pay for escaping gas through their carelessness or, if I refuse, they take out meter and leave me in the dark. I hope you will succeed in making them give us a brighter light and listen to a little reason. Respectfully, A. W. GUILD.

50c Ladies' Laundered Embroidered Collars, all sizes.

25c Ladies' warm fleeced-lined Gloves, all sizes. Behrend's special.

\$1.50 Ladies' and Gents' Silk Gloria Umbrellas, with paragon frames. Men's have boxwood and horn handles; ladies' have sterling silver and gold, with pearl and horn trimmings; worth \$1.50 choice.

Handkerchiefs For Ladies and Gents, Nicely Boxed

Ladies' 2c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs, as many as you want.....

Ladies' 5c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 10c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 15c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 20c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 25c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 30c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 35c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 40c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 45c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 50c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 55c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 60c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 65c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 70c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 75c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

Ladies' 80c White Hemstitched Handkerchiefs.....

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